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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KHARTOUM 000478

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DEPARTMENT FOR AF A/S FRAZER, AF S/E NATSIOS, AND AF/SPG
NSC FOR PITTMAN AND SHORTLEY
ADDIS ABABA ALSO FOR USAU

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SUBJECT: ELIASSON, SALIM CONSIDER UN/AU SUMMIT ON DARFUR

REF: A. TRIPOLI 00293

1B. KHARTOUM 00457

1C. KHARTOUM 00466

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Classified By: CDA Cameron Hume, Reason: Sections 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (C) Summary: During their March 22-27 visit to Sudan, UN Envoy Jan Eliasson and AU Envoy Salim Ahmed Salim told CDA Hume of the need to develop a credible political process for Darfur involving key stakeholders in Sudan and in the region.

CDA Hume emphasized that the UN and AU had a limited time to energize the peace process and suggested that the two bodies convene within the next three months a high-level meeting to launch negotiations on key issues of power-sharing, wealth-sharing, and security arrangements. End summary.

12. (C) Meeting with CDA Hume on March 26, UN Envoy Jan Eliasson and AU Envoy Salim Ahmed Salim acknowledged the need to legitimize a political process to end the Darfur crisis. They emphasized that this process should include Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) non-signatory movements, civil society, and political parties within Sudan--as well as regional actors. "We must take the drama out of the Heavy Support Package to give us the time and the diplomatic space to address the political problems," said Eliasson.

13. (C) CDA Hume stated that the UN and AU had a limited period of time to energize the political dialogue on Darfur. He suggested that UNSYG Ban Ki-moon and AU President Alpha Omar Konare convene a high-level meeting to discuss the crisis in Darfur within the framework of the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA). This meeting would address the key issues of power-sharing, wealth-sharing, and security, and negotiations on amendments to the DPA could be launched by the end of June.

14. (C) Eliasson and Salim responded that such an effort would be a mechanism "to make the political track credible." Over the next three months, they suggested that the UN and AU needed support in Sudan to lay the groundwork for the higher-level discussions. Eliasson said that this period would also allow for regional actors to be folded into the UN/AU process and said that they were discussing April 28 as a workable date for a Libyan-sponsored meeting in Tripoli, which would include S/E Natsios (Ref A). Salim said that Libya had also invited Eritrea to attend.

15. (C) CDA Hume underscored, however, that the international community had to obtain assurances from the Sudanese government on UN command and control for a Darfur

peace-keeping operation as the basis for future negotiation. Without such agreement, additional discussions on a UN force would be futile. Salim agreed that these assurances were essential. He further said that the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (UNDPKO) "needed to get its act together" and coordinate with the AU, asserting that the UN had added components to the Heavy Support and Hybrid Packages that were not stipulated in the Addis Ababa and Abuja agreements of November 2006.

¶6. (C) Both envoys were optimistic regarding First Vice President Salva Kiir's strategy to bring the non-signatories to negotiation and to defuse regional tensions with Chad, Libya, and Eritrea based on the long-standing relationships of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM). Kiir had described his recent trip to Chad and his meetings with President Deby and Sudan Federal Democratic Alliance (SFDA) leader Ahmed Diraij (Ref B). Salim characterized their meeting with Kiir as "the most fascinating" and described the First Vice President as "precise." Kiir had been optimistic that the SPLM could bring the majority of non-signatories to negotiations with the Sudanese government and calm regional tensions. (Note: Salim stated that Diraij lacked real political or military support within the Darfur rebel movements. Embassy contacts confirm this assessment. End note.)

¶7. (C) Salim explained, however, that Chad's "capacity to be difficult was endless" and that Libya's role could not be ignored. Eliasson noted Kiir's concerns that U.S. sanctions would derail the political process at a critical juncture and set-back SPLM efforts. Addressing rumors that the USG would soon level sanctions against Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) leader Khalil Ibrahim, he asked if such measures could be delayed until after he had traveled to Chad on March 28.

¶8. (C) Providing context to Kiir's recent engagement on the

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Darfur issue, CDA Hume said the SPLM had become more concerned about their responsibilities at the national level in the last four months. The SPLM could, for example, play a role in pressing the non-signatory movements to select a limited number of representatives to participate in the UN/AU-chaired negotiations. Eliasson agreed that the rebel leaders "should be forced to find common positions" and that a high-level summit would only accommodate a reasonable number of rebel interlocutors.

¶9. (C) The envoys commented on the egregious nature of the March 24 attack on Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM) facilities in Khartoum (Ref C). Salim applauded SLM leader and Senior Assistant to the President Minni Minawi for being "the only person who had the courage to sign the agreement." He said that it was important for the UN, the AU, and the international community to discuss the issue with the Sudanese government, both to sustain Minawi's participation in the DPA and to bring non-signatories to a peace agreement. "If they treat Minawi like junk, why would others sign an agreement?" questioned Salim. (Note: Eliasson and Salim visited Minawi on March 26 to discuss the attack, which we will report septel. End note.)

¶10. (C) Comment: A high-level UN/AU negotiation scheduled for late June would provide an essential framework in the next 100 days for Eliasson and Salim's efforts to advance the political process but would require strategic engagement with the Sudanese government. As a basis for a June meeting, Darfurians should be obligated to respect the cease-fire and humanitarian operations. The Government should halt aerial bombardment, cease support for Arab militias, and remove bureaucratic impediments to humanitarian assistance.

¶11. (C) Comment continued: The focus of the high-level negotiations would be on: 1) Power-sharing to expedite the development of Darfur regional institutions, launch the

Darfur Darfur Dialogue and Consultation, and improve participation of Darfur in government service; 2) Wealth-sharing to address the issue of compensation and gain a commitment from the international community to hold a pledging conference; and 3) Security arrangements, to secure Sudanese agreement to submit quarterly reports to the UN and AU on its efforts to comply with the security provisions of the DPA. End comment.

¶12. (C) Tripoli minimize considered.
HUME